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The Vision of  
Master Gerardus

And  
Other Pieces

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From one lover of nature to another -  
greeting - and this book.

Arthur Perryman  
Christmas 1910.



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The Vision of  
Master Gerardus  
And  
Other Pieces



The  
Vision of Master Gerardus  
And other Pieces

By  
Arthur Perryman  
*Author of "Largo, and other Pieces"*

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1910

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## The Vision of Master Gerardus

[Cologne Minster, of which the original architect is believed to have been Master Gerardus, was begun in 1248, and the choir consecrated in 1322. Thereafter the work languished, so that by the end of the 15th century all hope of seeing the edifice completed was abandoned. In 1796 it was converted by the French into a hay magazine. In 1824 the work of restoration was begun, and in 1842 the foundation stone of the new part of the building was laid. Finally on 15th October 1880 the completion of the Cathedral was celebrated in the presence of the German Emperor, surrounded by almost all the sovereign Princes of the Empire.]

SHALL I not live, do you ask, to see my Minster  
complete,  
I and the monks give praise, hearing the music  
roll,  
Blinded with pride of performance, feel the heart  
beat,  
Lauding the finished work? Go, fetch me yon  
scroll.

Look you and look you here! Thus and thus  
far have I wrought  
This imperfection of all God gave to my brain  
and hand,  
And as ever the vision brightened a higher vision  
I sought,  
And never I planned but I prayed, and prayed  
as ever I planned.

Ah, son, how sore is the truth that achievement  
can never fill  
Nor crown the artist's ideal: the summit gained,  
soars above  
The grander sublimer conception that springeth  
from striving, until  
Triumph o'ertopping triumph, we ask, Do we  
move?

Aye, so it must ever be, for here is no rest nor  
stay.  
Vision is given of God to man for what? That  
he see  
In his work a stone well laid of the broad and  
human way  
That leads to the Temple stair of a Builder  
greater than he.

Do we then live in the world, or doth the world  
live in us?  
This alone know I: all cometh from One sublime;  
Fashion we this or that, the ultimate truth runs  
thus,  
That which endures for ever hath no beginning  
in time.

For love is the heart of God, and the voice of  
the morning sings,  
When death looks age in the face, and all that  
the spirit willed  
Seems cancelled and stricken through, and the  
sense of failure stings,  
Mine is My servant's work. Lo! it shall be fulfilled.

Yea, oft in the vacant choir, where the vast  
unshapen mass  
Of speechless stone struck chill, have I had clear  
vision of Him,  
As I bowed in mine impotence, I have felt His  
garment pass,  
And around the unbuilt altar have heard His  
Cherubim.

Whoso only would build in the Domplatz builds  
in vain.

Hath not the word been said, Lo ! ye are builders  
all ?

Shall it avail that ye raise to Mine honour the  
splendid fane,

If your streets be dumb to My plea, and your  
peoples deaf to My call ?

If the vision be seared with pride and the soul  
be stained with desire,

Flawed and marred is the work ; the builder  
shall never know

That swift and surpassing strength of the humble  
who dare to aspire

To the love that is first, last, all to them who  
would have it so.

Sunlit spirits who build the Temple not made  
with hands

Fit and fair to His use, and wondrous with lovely  
deeds,

Does it shake your radiant faith that the swiftly  
running sands

Stay not, that ye must go, while yet the sick  
world bleeds,

While hearts are heavy with woe, and the snares  
of the wicked retard,  
And the sound of wailing is loud, and the shout  
of victory faint?  
They call for builders, O son: though the labour  
be long and hard,  
Carve thou thy niche in patience and see that it  
lack no saint.

Aye, thou lovest me well; and, though I seem  
to reprove,  
I speak from mine age to thy youth, for mine  
age hath taught me to bow  
Before the wisdom of Him whose name is Ineffable  
Love.  
Thou wouldst give me my Minster finished. Is  
God less just than thou?

Hearken, and ponder well. He sends me a thought  
to keep.  
Flesh baffles and power falls short; the mortal  
passes away  
Leaving his work unfinished: but if the immortal  
leap  
The barrier men call death, and work with us,  
—who shall say?

Thus have I come to believe that faith joins  
hands with power,  
Power manifest here in this broken effort of mine,  
Yet because I have done it for Him, His mighty  
love shall dower  
The work of our human hands with a splendour  
wholly divine.

Aye, more : for I dare to believe that side by  
side with my own,  
God hath builded the Real, the vision He gave  
me to see ;  
Had I stopped, or doubted His plan, or dreamed  
that I builded alone,  
His work had ceased, had failed, for that work  
depended on me.

What matter the body dies, since God and the  
soul live on ?  
And what, O son, is Time, but Eternity's measuring  
rod ?  
It is given to me to know that the work is  
finished and done.  
My Minster is there in that City whose Builder  
and Maker is God.

### New Year's Eve

SO dies the year, and standing at Time's pass,  
With bare brow fronting the cold winter sun  
That would not stroke to smiles the patient grass,  
With much of ill irrevocably done,  
And all my youth bespattered and bemired  
By walking in the path Thou didst condemn,  
I cried in bitterness, If I desired  
Thy soul, would I withhold the garment's hem?  
And as I wildly spake I felt my hand  
Clasped by the hand of One I could not see;  
O foolish heart that will not understand,  
A voice replied, wouldst thou have died for Me?  
Courage and peace! Thy sorrows and thy tears  
Are turned to joys, so I do keep thy years.



## Good Friday

O LITTLE child, spirit of joy and mirth,  
Glimpses of heav'n's far blue within thine  
eyes,

We who are grown to manhood, worldly-wise  
And heavily fleshed with grossness of the earth,  
How can there be for us a second birth?

Thou knowest not, dear lamb; no sunset lies  
Along thy verge of day, thou hear'st no cries  
Of agony of spiritual drought and dearth.

To be as little children once again!

God, who is pity and love, asks no vain thing;

For He hath borne the uttermost of pain

And human misery, that He might bring

Us to Himself, break up our hearts of stone

And make us little children, yea, His own.

## The Almond Tree

WHO would have thought so harsh and crabbed  
a thing  
Could in such fashion sing  
As to provoke love labour from the bee?  
But yesterday 'twas bare, a stick, now see  
Each branch is gemmed  
And royally diadem'd  
With blossoms rare and wondrous to behold,  
Pale in the spiritual air, nor haughty gold,  
Nor purple of the Cæsars doth it wear.  
Yet is it fair.  
Of Proserpina's children which more fair?

In the long winter of a soul's despair  
One to another said,  
Lo, this is dead,  
A useless thing which cumbereth the ground.  
But He who kept the garden on His round  
Rebuked them, saying, Is there then no spring  
For this which lieth chill, shall nothing bring  
Joy to the heart and praise to the lips of this?  
Nay: the world judges and will judge alway.  
Yet will I lay  
Upon this soul Mine own ineffable bliss.  
Then I beheld a wingèd seraph bear  
Through the celestial air  
A little child  
And place it in his arms; the father smiled.

## Welcome to Devon

**W**ELCOME to Devon ! whisper azure skies,  
Vehement ocean, listen how it vies  
In welcome ; the loud voice and the still small  
Alike the mouthpiece of a clearer call  
That lies beyond the ocean and the heaven  
Of pure delight, that overspreadeth all  
The beauty and the raptured joy of Devon.

Go to the woods ; go, seek the primrose mild,  
The violet, fair Nature's dearest child :  
Gather their fragrance, bring them to your room,  
Until the place shall be alight with bloom  
And melody of service to your need ;  
Nor fear at all ; it is not in the gloom  
Of death, but in God's heav'n they drop their  
seed.

And thou shalt hear the skylark and the thrush,  
And "blackbird boy" break up the sudden hush  
Into a very ecstasy of song,  
A Jubilate Deo, clear and strong,  
Thy heart's voice singing too ; and on the hill  
Shalt come upon a sight to hold thee long,  
The glory of a vagrant daffodil.

And winds of swift deliv'rance from the heath  
Shall breathe upon you with their living breath,  
The healthful sea shall benison your stay,  
The quiet of the eventide shall say,  
(For a great calm shall rest on land and sea),  
Lo, the deep shadow promises the day,  
Thou knowest not the joy that yet shall be.

O sun upon the waters and the moor,  
O splendour streaming through the open door,  
Which the majestic angel hath unbarred,  
That those bright spirits, glory-crowned and  
starred,  
May carry minist'ring hands to gently heal  
Her, whom the pitiless pain hath sorely scarred,  
Shine, and new radiance in the world reveal.

Take then your charge, O heaven and earth and  
sea,  
Ye flowers and birds, all lovely things that be,  
And let your everlasting music flow  
About her alway, soothing any woe  
Or pain or sad heart-sickness. O restore  
Health and a measure of strength, that we may  
know  
God worketh through you now and evermore.

**Blackbird**

O BLACKBIRD, sing me just one song.  
(Not I, not I).

O blackbird, I have waited long.

There's no reply.

But as I turn away in dull despair

One sudden note of rapture shakes the air,

Then stops, and I, alas, am made aware

'Tis but—Good-bye!

**Golders Hill**

A RUSTIC bridge, a tiny stream  
Where shining kingcups ever seem  
To stand at gaze in a wonder-dream :

And nigh thereto a little glade  
Of lively green and pleasant shade,  
A place which scents and blooms pervade ;

Where bluebells woo to earth the sky  
Between the white clouds sailing by,  
Seen through the fairy tracery

Of trees whose vernal loveliness  
Grows hour by hour, until their dress  
Doth hide the winter's nakedness.

And from the moss-root springs the frond  
Of forest fern, and just beyond  
The blackbird babbles, growing fond

And frantic 'neath the married state  
Of fetch and carry for his mate,  
And through the lilac-laden grate

I hear the merry romps at play  
Upon the green : old Sol would stay  
And gladly, but he must away.

O robin piping on the bush,  
You put the sunset to the blush,  
Which is the sweeter, you or thrush?

I cannot tell, but when he sings  
The rapture of remembered springs  
And summers and the holy things

Of childhood flood into my mind,  
Until my eyes with tears are blind.  
O thrush, O singer, is it kind?

But fainter grows the drowsy cheep  
Of tired birds ; the shadows creep,  
And lay upon each singer sleep.

Now cold and silent is the west,  
The moon enthroned with stars doth rest  
Her beams upon each happy nest.

### Spring Song

SING lark, sing robin, sing thrush, sing all  
Ye choired cherubim great and small  
Your glad thanksgiving  
For now the living  
Vision is seen and heard is the call.

And the thrill of light is on land and sea,  
Earth laughs with joy, and her shouts of glee  
Ring under and over  
From cover to cover  
Of hill and woodland and lawn and lea.

And the promise of blossom is everywhere,  
And the sweetbriar wooeth the charmed air,  
And whoso rejoices  
Heareth the voices  
Of beauty and rapture, of well and fair.

Lo, here is the bank where the primrose bides,  
And there the glade where the violet hides,  
And through the arches  
Of budding larches  
The child of the dayspring whispers of brides.

And the birds awake with a song to the dawn  
When the faint light whispers o'er garden and  
lawn,  
And over the meadow  
Speedeth the shadow  
Of night departing and clouds withdrawn.



And swift as wingèd lightning the streams  
Flash from the darkness of sleep and dreams,  
    The kingcups glisten,  
    The cowslips listen,  
Palely lit where the splendour gleams.

And tree calls tree, and flower calls flower,  
From fledgling nest and moss-crowned bower  
    The new life springeth  
    Bursting and bringeth  
Wonder and beauty hour by hour.

And twilight cometh and homeward wend  
The tired lambs, and they that tend,  
    And from the shimmering  
    Faintly glimmering  
Hills of even the stars ascend,

And shadows born of the wind and sky  
Come down to the earth and listen and die  
    Of too much weeping,  
    And on the sleeping  
Buds and blossoms the moonbeams lie.

COME, O lover of the Spring,  
Let us to the woods together.  
Robins pipe and throistles sing,  
See the swallow on the wing.  
And if it be rainy weather  
Then the showers  
Gem the bowers,  
Diamonds set in sunshine rare ;  
For the sunshine follows, follows  
Showers everywhere.  
And the heavens flash with blue  
Till pale waters take their hue,  
Lose themselves in clouds and sky  
And august immensity,  
Drifts and deeps and snowy mountains  
From whence flow the crystal fountains  
Which have crowned the dewy hollows  
With the wonder new,  
Ever new, yet ever old  
Of the springtime's lucent gold.

And the thrush  
Upon the bush  
Or in the clouded tree  
Tunes his throat  
To happy note  
And merry minstrelsy.  
O beloved, let us linger  
Listening to the joyous singer  
Singing all unseen  
In among the green.

But the thrush is not alone,  
He is only one.  
Hearken to the blackbird calling,  
And the skylark's song is falling,  
Falling, falling, falling, falling,  
Golden notes of song  
Which have rung about the arches  
And around the Throne,  
And have won the hidden rapture  
Which is heaven's own.  
Bird or spirit, thine the voice is  
Which for aye and aye rejoices,  
Who can do thee wrong?  
Not thy peers, for they do love thee,  
Not the God who reigns above thee,  
Not the birches, not the larches,  
Naught that lives and moves and marches  
Jubilant with song.  
Who then wrought the snare, the capture,  
And the sadly breaking heart,  
And the weary wistful eyes,  
And the fluttering fainting cries  
As the spirit droops and dies?  
Who hath done this thing of evil  
And hath wrested from the devil  
For his own Hell's vilest part?  
O my brother, O my brother,  
Man did this, man, and no other.

Let us go, the woods are dim,  
And with tears they seem to swim :  
Shadows darken my delight,  
Joy is maimed by man's despoil.

In Memoriam  
Algernon Charles Swinburne

*Obiit April 10th, 1909*

LO, in the springtime of this happy year,  
When fragrance born of flowers, and song of  
birds

Authenticate the everlasting words  
Of Him who spake as never man, the clear  
Articulate vision grows, and we draw near  
To that God's acre where the poet sleeps,  
The last great voice of England, poet-prince  
Of this our English tongue ; and from the deeps  
Of ocean sounds a dirge on muted strings,  
And on the far horizon sweep the wings  
Of that illimitable host  
Who veil the brightness of the face of God.  
And the exceeding glory burns and flashes,  
And the dirge quickens resonant, and crashes  
Upon the coast ;  
But thou, beneath the sod,  
Dost in great quietness sleep.

Thou wast the sweetest singer of this land ;  
To others other gifts, 'twas thine to sing  
In thine own perfect way the blossoming  
Of every temporal joy, and to thine hand  
God gave the lyre  
Of vocal melody, that, touched with fire  
Brought from His holy altar, thou shouldst stand  
And speak the voice of England, thou and she,  
The lion-hearted woman ; ye did see

The dawn, despite the murk of bloody war,  
Through the thick darkness saw the morning star  
And the clear heav'n unstained by any cloud ;  
When all men bowed,  
Ye saw a kingly people, unified and free,  
Italy, Italy.

Wherefore great thanks to thee, thou gifted one.  
Not Italy alone  
Doth give thee thanks, but every noble heart  
That beats for freedom claims thee for its own ;  
Thou hadst the royal part,  
And royally sang ; and now thou hast the best  
Gift of the Gods of Greece, deep sleep and rest.

Thy song shall live. Shall not the singer live  
To see the cause he wrought for crown'd,  
complete ?  
When thou art healed of pain, shall not thy feet  
Make swift return to where thy kinsmen give  
Wager of battle to all tyranny,  
And whoso binds the chain, or makes a lie ?

They say thou hadst no vision of the Grail,  
And didst not love our Christ. Perchance the  
forms  
Had loved not thee when thunder-smitten storms  
Burst o'er thy soul, and the intolerant hail  
Ravaged the snow-white flowers of Paradise.  
And yet I think thou didst not wholly fail,  
Who sang of Freedom, Italy, and Truth,  
Who saw the sunlit heights with eyes of youth,  
Wherein the glad surprise

Of new and strange, of beauty and delight  
Taught thy lips song that knows nor day nor  
    night.

And it were meet  
That unto him whose sweet  
And perfect music oft-times was of them,  
The little children, knowing naught of death  
Or heavy longing for sleep, should bring a wreath  
To crown the friend they loved, and at his feet  
Lay it for bridal-burial. Is he dust  
In whom these little children put their trust?

His *Ave* *alque Vale*, soft and slow,  
Throbs in the twilight; but beneath the clod  
Life, and the joy of life sings. Let us go,  
And leave him who hath tryst to keep with God.

## Pain

*Settleth in pain the jewel of his joy.*

*—Myers' St. Paul.*

## I

WHETHER God be, or be not, suffering is,  
Sorrow and pain, the heavy weight of tears,  
The menace of the swift-consumèd years  
Ending the term of life devoid of bliss,  
Ending all Why and Wherefore with that kiss  
Which seals for ever human hopes and fears.  
And the stung spirit cries, as those dread shears  
Sever the thread, What aim or end in this?  
Better for man if he had never been;  
Better for man to root out all the weak,  
The blinded wisdom answers; ye have seen  
The inexorable law, and still ye speak  
Of mercy and of love? Make strong the strong,  
To succour weakness is the only wrong.

## II.

God proves His presence in the world by pain ;  
Who conquers suffering proves His Fatherhood ;  
Who bears the anguish, crying, Thou art good,  
Proves Christ the Elder Brother yet again,  
Christ, who because He suffered, can sustain,  
And give the strength to stand where He hath  
stood,  
And crown His deathless saints ; 'gainst such the  
flood  
And fury of the world do rage in vain.  
For this is true ; I speak what I do know ;  
That I have heard the clarion note of faith  
Ring from the couch of pain ; it must be so  
Christ's living power is proved, the spirit saith ;  
And my bowed heart was smitten into flame,  
And weakness wrought my strength to nobler aim.

## III.

Who suffer nobly, gain all noble things,  
The high eternal things of might and worth,  
The base, the vile, the mean are scourged to earth  
And cannot touch them more ; the poet sings  
The songs God loves to hear, and straight there  
springs  
Deep in the heart of pain, as though the birth  
Of Easter lilies gladdened all the dearth,  
Joy, and the Praiser sweeps the quivering strings.  
This is the jewel He setteth in His pain ;  
More dire the need, more swift is He to bless,  
Sharper the anguish, more intense the strain,  
By so much more ye prove His worthiness.  
Ye know Him now, and when the mortal dies,  
Ye shall behold Him with immortal eyes.



## In the Zermatt Valley

**M**EADOWS of flowers, then the deep hush of  
pines,  
Shadows made glorious by the sun's fair self,  
The overflowing smile of the young day, born  
To wanton mirth, to swift and bright caress  
Of all the wondrous beauty of the earth.  
Quietness doth love this valley, and herself,  
The high handmaiden of the Highest, dwells  
Visibly here : and all the summer day  
The rushing torrent sings its loudest praise :  
The haunting music of the cattle bells  
Steals from afar, and who hath ears to hear  
Shall hear the bluebells call to them again.

What song is this the little river sings?  
Of freedom from the snow-bound solitudes?  
Of joy that now it runs and leaps and plays  
Don Quixote, full a-tilt at giant rocks,  
And when it falls back baffled, straight there comes  
A sunbeam smiling, whispers, Never mind,  
And speeds it laughing on its way again?  
Or hath it the deep longing of all life  
To merge itself in that far deeper life  
From whence all flows? Or is it but a child,  
A child-stream now alight with song and stir,  
But ever slowly broadening as it runs  
Until at last, at the appointed time,  
The mighty river takes it to herself?

The solemn pines were never made to smile,  
So you would say : but then you would be wrong,  
For I have seen the straitest starkest pines  
Whose frown was terrible to look upon  
Break out in such a ripple of frolic glee  
At merely seeing sunbeams play peep-bo  
That I'll ne'er more believe their austere looks.  
What is more beautiful than pines alight  
With the sun's splendour, and their moving plumes  
Crying Hosanna in the living breeze?  
To see them so, to hear their adoration  
Is to be lifted very near to God.

Those cattle bells again ! A simple thing  
To move my soul to knowledge that all strife  
So rightly fought, is crown'd at last with peace,  
As these dumb beasts are hushed to rest at even.  
And yet not strange : these bells call up and on.  
If God is spirit, all is spiritual,  
The meanest and the mightiest are His work,  
And simple souls, who tremble when they hear  
Articulate the mountains praising God,  
Will joy that in their harmony is found  
Place for this human lowly note of praise.  
And when the valley, scarce awake from sleep,  
Is heavy with the shadows, when the dawn  
Flames on the guarded ramparts of the snows,  
And Zinal-Rothorn fires his peaks to heav'n,  
Out from the shadows, up into the light  
The bells lead on : and when at eve the sun  
Smites with its living glory those twin spires,  
Crowns them for one brief moment with the rose,  
While all the valley hushes into night,  
The bells come home, the bells come chiming home.

Finger of God, unspeakably sublime,  
Soaring from out the cloud into the blue,  
Voice audible forever from the cloud,  
Not here, but there, O son, shalt thou be blest ;  
Upward and onward, far beyond the blue  
Lies thy true home, thou for whom I was made.  
Speak ever thus, nor cease, O Matterhorn !

## A Song of St. Valentine's Day

THO' Winter lingers, he grows old,  
As days bring in the light,  
And every cloud is lin'd with gold  
To welcome his despite.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,  
With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

The earth is brown and barren, yet  
It shall burst into bloom,  
The crocus and the violet  
Shall laugh away the gloom.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,  
With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

For lo, and lo, each hidden root  
That hath been buried long,  
Sends up a swift and living shoot  
To join the swelling song.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,  
With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

And tho' the trees stand stark and drear,  
And have not shewn their buds,  
The spring is here, to us 'tis clear :  
So say the birdling bloods.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,  
With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

We come to woo, we come to mate :

Thus robin, thrush, and wren :

We may not wait till 'tis too late,

As oftentimes do men.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,

With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

For we have work that must be done,

And so we may not bide,

Till this day's sun hath joined as one

The bridegroom and the bride.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,

With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

Thus sing the birds, while snowdrops stoop

To bid their compeers come.

He only says that snowdrops droop,

Who calls the brown earth dumb.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,

With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

For all the flowers are on the march,

The hyacinth and the rose ;

The snowdrop sees the springing arch

Arising from the snows.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,

With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

That arch of rare immortal worth,

Each flow'r a priceless gem,

Which gives to earth a newer birth

And richer diadem.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,

With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

O dear delight of length'ning days,  
When Ver's apostle floods  
The quiet ways with raptured praise,  
And windflow'rs star the woods.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,  
With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.

When sheeted waters take the blue,  
And shining daffodils  
Pave wastes anew with heav'ns hue,  
And glorify the hills.

Sing ho the lusty laughing spring,  
With his own flow'rs we'll crown him king.  
Sing merrily, merrily-ho!

**A Toast**

*To W. H. H.*

WHEN wintry weather brings home good cheer,  
The hearth is swept, and the fire burns clear,  
And the wassail bowl  
Stands cheek by jowl  
With reeking rummers that warm the soul,  
Glasses aloft, glasses aloft,  
Glasses aloft for a toast to thee.

This be the toast I raise to thee :  
Long life, good health and good company,  
A heart still young  
When the song is sung  
And the last jest made and the last card flung.  
Then glasses aloft, glasses aloft,  
Glasses aloft for this toast to thee.

### Question and Answer

OUT of the Vast rang a voice that spake  
Unto the soul that strove :  
And the strife-worn soul saw the heavens shake,  
The dominant ocean move.  
From the empyrean the question came :  
Which wouldst thou choose, wealth, honours,  
fame,  
Or one pure woman's love ?

And o'er the fathomless brooding deep  
That was old ere time began,  
A thrill as of worlds awaking from sleep  
To infinite glories ran.  
Love would I choose, for through love I claim  
Kinship with Deity, not through fame  
Or aught that is given of man.



### Little Hands

LITTLE hands, little hands  
Quiet and at rest,  
Little hands, little hands  
Folded on his breast,  
Who shall question God's commands,  
God, who knoweth best ?

Yet to never feel again  
His dear dimpled cheek  
Pressed to mine, nor hear again  
My beloved speak,—  
Thou who givest me this pain,  
I am very weak.

When they placed him in my arms—  
(Wherefore do I weep ?  
Thou dost bear him in Thy arms,  
Shepherd of the sheep,  
Death is done and all alarms  
For my babe asleep).

Keep him holy, let me bear,  
Lord, I whispered low,  
Pain and anguish, let me bear  
What of bitter woe  
Shall be his ; God heard my prayer  
And hath willed it so.

Nay, but I must weep awhile  
For a little space,  
Oh, my heart must break awhile ;  
There's an empty place  
In this sad heart for the smile  
Of the baby face.

Yet I know that they are near,  
Gentle hovering hands.  
Dead ? Ah yes, but he is near ;  
Sorrow understands  
Darkly, but all shall be clear.  
Little, little hands !

## The Brown Earth

WHEN the brown earth awakes from winter's sleep,  
And the light wind makes music in the woods,  
Singing a bridal-song to waiting flowers,  
And the sun sends his swiftest harbingers  
To kiss the trees to beauty ere he come :  
When every glade and bush o'erflows with praise,  
And the fair dawn, walking with unshod feet  
Among the dewy grasses, whispers, Come,  
So that each vale and hill and upland moor  
And bosky dell flames suddenly with joy  
Of daffodil and primrose, hyacinth  
And all the loved companions of the spring,  
We cry, What wondrous glory shines where late  
We saw brown earth that was not beautiful.

Ah yes, and thus it is with human life.  
The fortunate, the talented, the fair,  
Who stand in the world's eye, catch the world's  
praise,  
Who sing the splendid song, make music speak  
The deathless pæans ringing round God's throne,  
Leaders of men, who seem co-heirs with God  
In undisputed sovereignty and state  
Of earthly destinies and high emprise  
We envy, and we cry, Were I as they  
How great a gain had God.

And yet, and yet  
Though lilies bloom, their roots are fast in earth.  
God's sun and God's brown earth they needs  
must have,  
Else were their radiance cast away and lost.

O dear brown earth of living human souls,  
Precious to God, because unrecognised,  
He lays His finger here, and here, and says,  
Let this one speak, and from the mass there springs  
A flower radiant in the noonday sun.  
Shall the earth murmur that she bears the flower?  
Shall the flower spurn the earth and seek the sun,  
Disroot itself, to be the nearer God?  
Woe to that flower! It fades and perishes.

And when your poets speak the shining word,  
It is not wholly theirs; you make their lives  
By beauty of your own; they root in you,  
And reach to God, carry your praise to Him.  
So you and they alike are glorified.

For lo, it chanced this evening as I walked,  
And saw the beauties of our own loved Heath  
Falling asleep in quietness and peace,  
I met three little children, ragged, worn,  
Flow'rs of some far-off slum in Edgware Road,  
(Such flowers our England grows. God shall  
requite!)

And they had come to see the grass and trees  
And hear the birds, so said the elder boy,  
A gentle lad, with eyes that looked beyond  
The sunset, and a face for Raphael.  
Such faces God gives to His little ones.

What bearing on my text? perchance you ask.  
But this: had I not seen that child's dear face,  
The world had lost this poem. Is it mine  
Who speak, or his who gave, flower or brown  
earth?

God knows and cares, and He shall recompense.

## The West Lyn

ROSY champions in the banks ;  
(O, the autumn weather!)  
Dancing stream, I give thee thanks,  
Let us sing together.  
Moss-strewn boulders bid thee stay,  
Give thee pause and give thee play,  
Thou dost make them sing alway.

Youth the lesson get to heart  
Ere 'tis autumn weather.  
Smoothness gives no good song start,  
Rough and smooth together,  
Joys that are with sorrows rife,  
Pain and pleasure, peace and strife,  
Make the music of this life.

### Evening : Malmsmead to Brendon

THESE are the hills, and the royal heather  
Clasps the sun to itself once more,  
Bracken and gorse are aflame together,  
The sea's far music breaks on the shore,  
Glenthorne woods are alive with shadows,  
Sunbeam and shadow, they both are one,  
The cattle lie in the peaceful meadows,  
Almost the day is done.

Lo, in this hour of clear revealing,  
Calm and joy of the eventide  
Flood my soul with a wondrous healing,  
Bring me home to the things that abide.  
Swallows dip where the waters darken,  
Malmsmead Bridge looks into the stream.  
Whoso hath ears to hear shall hearken,  
Whoso would dream shall dream.

Ears that are open shall hear the singing,  
The last full notes of the Hymn of Praise,  
Woods where the bluebell flowered are ringing  
With music of other far-spent days.  
All that was, in its beauty and wonder,  
Lives again as the evening falls.  
I stand at the heart of it, over and under  
The voice of the Spirit calls.

For over my head the clouds are fleeting,  
Under my feet is the quickening sod,  
Earth with heaven at last is meeting,  
Her hills are robed as the angels of God.  
The fire of the Presence burns in the heather,  
Their feet are shod with the quenchless flame,  
Where the pure light crowns them they sing  
together,  
Naming the Holy Name.

And the word of the song is of love unending,  
Of life that knoweth nor fear nor death,  
Of beauty and power alike transcending  
Fleshly things and the words of breath.  
The spirit stands in a glow supernal,  
Soul from body is rapt away,  
Seen is the vision which makes eternal  
Summer in winter's day.

**Benedictus**

(The New Churchyard at Lynton)

**H**OW quiet is this consecrated spot.  
Save for the happy song of God's dear birds,  
And the soft music of the autumn wind  
Stirring to praise the grasses, all is hushed.  
Summer hath breathed a blessing and is gone,  
Autumn is here, with all her golden store.  
The ripened grain is gathered, harvest home  
Irradiates the reapers' thankful hearts  
With gladness and content, and lips o'erflow  
With laughter and with song.

Do they who sleep  
Beneath this turf so tremulous with joy,  
So pregnant with the wondrous life that is,  
But is not yet fulfilled, do they arise  
Crowned with the light ne'er seen on land or sea,  
Hymning the chant ne'er heard by human ears?  
O there were some who reaped not, whose young  
lives

So fair they were, fair as the spring flowers are  
That blossom in the happy primrose time,  
Looked on the world with wondering trustful  
eyes

And found their Father's smile, and heaven on  
earth.

And, as the flower grew to perfectness,  
We watched and tended, fearful lest a frost  
Should leave the parent's heart so desolate  
That faith nor hope could ever live again.



Ye little children, flowers of the living God,  
Whom He hath gathered to Himself once more,  
Do ye not play in fields of asphodel,  
Weaving fair garlands where the soft pure light  
Is lovelier than earthly dawn or eve?  
Lay lilies on the little children's graves,  
In the child heart 'tis ever Easter time.  
And in this spot beside the Severn Sea  
Girt round with war-worn rock and sunny hill,  
Are those who in the evening of this life  
Saw the bright star, and knew the dawn would  
    come.

O toiling hands and patient steadfast eyes!  
The common folk, who make our England great,  
Without whom England were impossible,  
What flowers for these? The victor's laurel  
    wreath,

None other will suffice, for they have wrought  
Through toil and tribulation to life's end,  
Made us to know that life is royal for all,  
A brave thing and a true; no jewelled crown  
Of praise and privilege had earth for them,  
Yet God shall give a crown to all His saints.

## Song on the Foreland

UP Countisbury Hill  
I toiled, in autumn weather.  
The sun was on the heather,  
The breeze was off the sea  
And was blowing pure and free.  
White sails were sparkling, gleaming,  
The Channel quietly dreaming,  
And September sunlight streaming  
Washed land and sea with gold  
Most glorious to behold.  
But of Countisbury Hill  
I had more than had my fill  
When at last I reached the top.  
There I had, perforce, to stop,  
For a jolly little Robin was sitting on a bough,  
'Twas a holly bush, I vow,  
And he sang, ah, how he sang,  
Till it seemed the Foreland rang  
With the music of his singing,  
With the rapture of his singing,  
With the wonder and the rapture of the music  
    he was flinging  
Far and wide.  
And methought a something died  
In the beauty of the morning  
And arose again, adorning  
The earth as 'twere a bride.

And I heard the matin song  
Of creation, sweet and strong,  
Outpouring in the note  
From the pulsing ruddy throat,  
And my heart went out with joy  
To the bird who washed the stain  
Of the passion, and the pain,  
And the city's base alloy  
From my soul,  
And made me strong and whole,  
With the vision of a man, and a child's heart  
once again.

## The Father, the Mother, and God

*The son :*

WEEP not, dear mother; father, do not weep.

What though I die? To die is not to sleep,  
But to be freed from care,  
To breathe the ampler air,  
Attuned to God's clear consciousness of life :  
And, having rested for a little space,  
And seen the glory shining on His face,  
I shall return, renewed  
With gazing there, and with fresh power  
    endued,  
And armed for further strife.  
Ye dear ones, weep not. He is here as there.

*The father :* You shall not die, my son, my only son.

Speak not of death ; in truth I grow distraught  
To hear that word. Have I not watched the  
thought  
Expand your forehead, and all noble worth  
Answer the call of your clear soul, and earth  
In all its beauty leap—

*The mother :* Thy will be done.

*The father :* Thy will be done ! Kind sir, this is my boy,  
About to die,—at least they tell me so.  
His age ? But twenty-two. He might enjoy  
Honours and fame, so gifted—There's the sting.

The flower opens, promises the spring,  
And summer's dower, and autumn's living  
sheaves,—

And after that the winter? Aye, for sure,  
But first the full fruition; that, no more,  
I hoped for and I prayed for. No one grieves  
When the pale twilight calls the fading leaves  
To their long rest; so I could well endure  
To die that he might live,—you understand?  
Death after life is well; the last few grains of  
sand,—

You know the similes,—sunset in the west:  
But my boy's dying; faith falters at the test.  
'Twas only yesterday the message came  
That he was Senior Wrangler. Dear old dad,  
He cried, my boy, the paper in his hand,  
For mother's sake and yours I'm proud and  
glad,

And yet am prouder still I bear your name.  
'Twas only yesterday! O God, I shall go mad!

*The mother:* My son! My son! God, give us  
strength to bear

Thy chastening, faith to bridge the little space  
Which separates us from our dear one's face,  
Whom Thou hast taken to Thyself, the grace  
Of his pure presence minist'ring to Thine.  
O Father, Thou who gavest for a sign  
Thine only Son to death, that He might prove  
Our human sorrows vessels of Thy love,  
Grant but to us to know that he is near.

*The father:* So! Prayer avails not, love avails not,  
naught  
Avails, and God must have our only son.

For Israel's God none other would have done,  
Of course, and hearts must break ; or else  
perhaps

Zeus, tired of his cupbearer, needs must have  
Our own, our best beloved for his slave  
To furnish wine, as in the old Greek play  
He told us of, last Easter holiday.

*The mother :* O husband, peace !

*The father :* Ha ! ha ! a pretty thought !  
And pretty gods to grace it. Sorrow saps  
Belief in any gods, save Fate and Chance.  
Oh, I'll be calm. And time and circumstance  
Will heal the wound ? Aye, deaden it, you  
mean.

And I must still be patient ? Wait till God  
Strikes down your boy, so gifted and so young,  
Dead at your feet, then we'll sing harvest home  
For the unripened sheaves, and when that's  
sung,

And naught but graves to live for, bring the  
rod

And we'll bow down together, praising Him  
For sending us such sorrow. Oh, there's a  
swim

O' tears in your eyes, I know. And I must  
walk

Stumbling, alone, hear other fathers talk  
With pride about their boys ; He's doing well,  
Such brave reports, and then his letters too,—  
Oh, don't I know it all,—the throb, the swell  
O' the father's heart, headmaster's shake o' the  
hand,—

Your son ? A fine young fellow ; yes, he'll do

Credit to all he touches,—Oh, it's hell  
To hear it, knowing what mine might have  
    been ;  
It's dying day by day. No devil planned  
A torment more infernal ; and I swear  
I'll sit here hour by hour, and watch him thus,  
The smile upon his lips, called up for us  
Out of his agony, to ease our pain,  
Until his image burns into my brain,  
And burns out God's, if it existed there.

*The mother :* My husband, is it such a little thing,  
My suffering too, that you should hurt our dead  
Who sleeps with Christ ? Sleeps ? I had well  
    nigh said  
Already is arisen. There's a sting  
Of strange exultance in the air ; I seem  
Half sorrow and half joy, I know not why,  
Unless it be the viewless barriers fall,  
And through the heavy stillness comes that  
    voice  
We loved to hear, crying, Beloved, rejoice !  
I did but fall asleep, and now I call,  
The Master prompting, likewise unto ye,  
Who soon must die to prove ye cannot die,  
Bidding ye be of cheer. O do I dream,  
Or is the spirit's hindrance torn apart,  
In this world and in that heart beats to heart ?  
For see, he stands and smiles, our son, our boy,  
Compassion, love, and an immortal joy  
Transfiguring his face. I see him clear,  
More clear than when he lived. The stainless  
    peace  
Of one who looks on God is in his eyes.

How strange it is that he should be so near  
 That I could touch him, having none of fear  
 Or sorrow more. Love, joy, and power increase  
 To those who serve God here ; there's no  
 surprise

That He should will it so ; and now he stands,  
 My boy, beside me, and the gentle hands  
 That used to soothe the headache, cool my  
 brow,

And the swift healing overflows, and now  
 He speaks to us,—

*The father :* I cannot see nor hear.

*The mother :* Listen ! He speaks. Belovèd, see,  
 I live

And am the same, and yet am not the same :  
 The same in that dear love that I would give  
 To ye who gave ; no power can check nor  
 stay

The love which comes from God and bears  
 His Name.

All that was wrought in faith knows no decay ;  
 All that was learnt in love hath swift increase ;  
 All that is best on earth is good in heaven,  
 With for more good, an everduring peace.

For, O belovèd, all the science, art,  
 And knowledge that I won live on with me,  
 Grow to fulfilment, and have place and part  
 In that fair future which I may not see  
 Until God calls : for lo, His service waits.

Achievements there are weapons in my hand  
 For battle here ; He takes them, consecrates  
 All things anew : for here are war and strife,  
 No leisured peace, belovèd, no far isles



There where the sun-kissed sea for ever smiles,  
They dreamed of in old Greece ; no balmèd  
sleep

Untroubled by earth's sorrows, but the deep  
Unresting pain and scald of human tears.  
Misery wrought of evil in that life  
Stalks awfully, ah yes, and here are sheep  
Who own no shepherd ; weary bleeding feet  
That know no rest, because they spurned the  
gift

Of doing good, wherein alone is rest.  
And Christ hath care of these, ah, doubt it not,  
Hath need of these, and will not let them go,  
Biddeth adventure all, that we may lift  
The dull dead eyes to His, and smite His foe  
As when on earth. Ye dear ones, were it best  
That I should sleep, hearing His service call,  
Taste heaven's joys, earth's sorrows all forgot,  
While these, my brothers, faint without and  
fall ?

That were to miss the vision of His peace,  
To miss the glad Well done ! to miss the glow  
And rapture of His warrior saints, who know  
Through suffering that one day shall suffering  
cease,

And evil die. Belovèd, be ye strong  
To comfort others, so shall ye be blest,  
And joys shall bind your sorrows with a song.  
For I am ever with you.

*The mother :*

O my son !

*The father :* Teach me, O Lord, to pray Thy will  
be done.



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